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AUTHOR Weinberg, Barry M.
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ABSTRACT

In 1985, Maryland's Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) launched a major scholarship fund-raising drive in response to limited federal, state and county funding. The campaign began with an account balance of $30,000; today the school has scholarships over $450,000. The success of AACC's fund-raising drive resulted from the commitment demonstrated by faculty and staff through direct donation or payroll deduction, by business and industry in Anne Arundel County, and by students, alumni, and employees. The key elements influencing donor motivation were: (1) belief in a specific cause; (2) excitement over making an impact; (3) individual benefits such as tax breaks, peer approval, and free advertising; (4) feelings of altruism; and (5) the need to be recognized and appreciated. Instead of utilizing large numbers of volunteers, the AACC campaign used trustees, local corporate executives, faculty members, and staff to personally approach prospective donors. Over a period of five years, the scholarship campaign incorporated college talent shows, golf/tennis tournaments, faculty/student athletic challenges, community yard sales/auctions, 10K runs, payroll deduction programs, memorial scholarship programs, performing arts series, raffles, and a credit card program into its campaign activities. (WJT)

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Anne Arundel Community College

Scholarship Fund Development: The Art of Successful Begging

Dr. Barry M. Weinberg

Director of Financial Aid/Veteran Affairs and Scholarships

Anne Arundel Community College

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Scholarship Fund Development: The Art of Successful Begging

For some time now, the debate on financing access versus choice in American higher education has received a great deal of media and public attention. This heightened awareness, however, occurs in cycles and most often does not lead to increased revenues. Of one thing we can be certain, public community colleges, 4-year institutions and many private colleges and universities will not enjoy a significant infusion of fiscal support above their current levels. This fact leads to the disconcerting realization that public funds allocated for student financial aid will remain inadequate to meet the needs of our constituencies. We must therefore as a profession become proactive in an effort to secure private sector assistance for students.

In 1985, acknowledging the challenge of limited federal, state and county funding, Anne Arundel Community College launched a major scholarship fund raising drive. Focusing on the theme "A Quality Investment", the campaign commenced with an account balance of $30,000. Today, we now have established scholarships in excess of $450,000. Some $325,000 of that amount is endowed. Our goal is to reach $1 million in endowed scholarships.

The success enjoyed by the college results from the commitment demonstrated by faculty members and staff through direct donation and payroll deduction programs and from Anne Arundel County as a whole - business and industry, students,

alumni, employees, and friends. A high degree of community support is a prerequisite to any effective fund raising campaign.

Summarizing the psychology of donor motivation and outlining the key elements of a successful campaign is akin to a mosquito at the opening day of a nudist colony, excited as heck but not knowing quite where to begin. Development officers and fund raisers assert there are identifiable patterns of motives that influence individuals who make large gifts to non-profit institutions such as colleges and universities. Its been my experience that the following reasons are relevant.

- Belief In A Cause: Individuals and families who have experienced a bout with a disease or believe in what a medical institution represents, contribute a large percentage of health profession scholarship donations.
- Challenge Of Making An Impact: Individuals become excited with the prospect of making a big enough gift to assure the success of the campaign, or to provide endowments to guarantee scholarship funding for the institution.
- Compelling Need To Benefit Personally: This involves more selfish but powerful motives, i.e., fear of death so "buy salvation" with a large gift, need for a return on investment (tax benefits, acceptance, a form of advertising).
- Desire To Help Others: This strong motivator constitutes the basis for developing most cases for scholarship support and is one of mankind's highest values.

- Feeling Of Loyalty And Obligation: These nobel motives relate to appreciation for personal or family help, benefits, past family service to the institution, remembrance of a key person and love of alma mater.
- Need To Be Recognized: Most people want to be recognized, appreciated, approved of and remembered, some for the present among peers (competition and power) and some for posterity (immortality). Memorial scholarships attest to this need.
- Response To Being Asked For A Gift: Most people like to be asked. Experienced presidents, development officers and fund raisers place this as the most important motive and priority.
- Combinations Of Motives: Although there is usually a dominant motive, more than likely, several motives are at work and therefore influencial in making a scholarship donation.
- Socio-Economic "Status" Values: Most donors give to peer-level friends and leaders and do not give or give less to those below their status. It simply works that way.

Effective scholarship campaigns involve the systematic acquisition of annual and endowed gifts through a connected series of organized activities. The Anne Arundel campaign, conceived and implemented by the director of financial aid, assistant to the president for development and the development officer is a continuous, never ending quest for gifts from individuals and corporations. Particular attention is paid to individual donors as research concludes they make 85% of all contributions to institutions of higher education. Instead of a

large corps of volunteers, the ongoing campaign relies on a small cadre of key leaders - trustees, local corporate executives, faculty members and staff - to personally approach (phone calls followed up by personal visits) prospective donors. Most importantly, our solicitations acknowledge basic truisms of giving: people give to people, not to institutions; people give for people; donors make major commitments to winning causes, not to needy institutions; and the habit of giving generates generosity. Individuals who give every year consistently give more generously in succeeding years. Nationally successful fund raising campaigns, such as United Way, Muscular Dystrophy, March of Dimes, appeal to the public's emotions through personalizing the human condition.

Although no single campaign structure can fit all educational organizations, campus steering committees and community leaders can develop comprehensive strategies to serve many their institutions regardless of size or complexity. Having evolved over a period of five years, the following fund raising activities have been incorporated into our scholarship campaign repertoire:

- Faculty/Student Athletic Challenges (Basketball, Softball)
- Community Yard Sales/Auctions
- College Talent Show
- Cookbook
- Golf/Tennis Tournament and Banquet
- 10K Run

- Dinner Theatre
- "We Are Family" Payroll Deduction Scholarship Program
- Memorial Scholarship Programs
- Performing Arts Series
- "The Winner's Circle" Parking Spot Raffle
- Affinity Credit Card Program

As we enter the 1990s, institutions of higher education face a most serious threat - a lack of money. Administrators recognize that financial deficiencies create educational mediocrity. I further posit that no college or university ever became great through appropriations. Faced with the changing complexion of their financial base, educational leaders are looking to the private philanthropic community to increase their ability to maintain academic excellence. The financial aid profession faces an equally demanding challenge. New sources of financial assistance must be developed now to ensure student access and choice. Private sector scholarships provide this vehicle. Dynamic campaigns provide the process. We can afford to wait no longer.

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